U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center (USAASC)
2011 School Of Choice (SOC) Program Announcement

Opening Date: March 11, 2011
Closing Date: May 2, 2011
Board Date: May 16, 2011
Notifications made to selectees: Early June 2011
Classes to start no earlier than August 1, 2011
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Attention Applicants

You should read and understand all requirements of the SOC program prior to submission of an application

The USAASC is pleased to announce the offering of the 2011 SOC program. The USAASC will sponsor students to participate in the program based on eligibility and application criteria as well as the availability of funds.

GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

The SOC program is a highly competitive 18-24 month **full-time** degree granting program that provides civilian members of the Acquisition, Logistics and Technology (AL&T) workforce an opportunity to keep their current acquisition position while completing a Bachelors or Masters degree during duty hours. Applicants must be certified for the position they currently encumber and this must be documented on the Acquisition Career Record Brief (ACRB) before the submission of a SOC program application. Full-time program status is defined by enrolling and attending a minimum of four courses each semester or quarter, regardless of the university's full-time definition. If the applicant or school of choice cannot accommodate this rigorous course load, applicants should not apply. The SOC program is restricted to colleges and universities that are nationally accredited and offer degree programs in Business or disciplines that directly support acquisition functions as outlined in the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) Interactive Catalog (iCatalog), http://icatalog.dau.mil/onlinecatalog/CareerLvl.aspx. Schools must be located within the applicants' local commuting area (no more than 50 miles) or provide web-based programs. For Bachelor degrees, each student must take a minimum of four courses per semester. Each course will not be funded above $1,550 for tuition and $150 for books. The maximum total funding allowed through the SOC program for a Bachelors degree is 20 courses or 60 credit hours. For Master degrees, each student must take a minimum of four courses per semester. Each course will not be funded above $2,050 for tuition and $150 for books. The maximum total funding allowed through the SOC program for a Masters degree is 15 courses or 45 credit hours. Funding above these thresholds is the responsibility of the applicant. Travel expenses and prerequisite course work, i.e. GMAT or GRE for entering the degree program, will not be funded. In any semester and term where the student has less than the minimum required courses to complete a degree, the student is considered part-time and should report back to duty while completing the degree. In addition, participants must maintain a grade of at least a "C" in all undergraduate courses and a "B" in all graduate

courses. Participants must reimburse the program in full for all failed, withdrawn or incomplete courses before proceeding with additional courses. Two failures, withdrawals or incompletes from a SOC program funded course(s) will result in removal from the SOC program with a one year restriction on reapplying.

WHO MAY APPLY

The SOC program will support the completion of a Bachelors or Masters degree for civilian AL&T workforce members GS-11 through 15 and pay band equivalent within a Demonstration Project or the National Security Personnel System who have met their current position certification requirements. The target audience for the SOC program is the best performing workforce members who have been identified by their supervisor as demonstrating the potential for positions of increased responsibility and their lack of education is impeding their career progression. Applicants who do not meet this criterion or cannot take the minimum required courses each semester or quarter should apply for part-time tuition assistance through the Acquisition Tuition Assistance Program (ATAP): http://asc.army.mil/career/programs/atap/default.cfm.

Bachelors applicants must:

- Request an official transcript from the accredited university that will validate 60 credit hours of completed courses and upload in the Army Acquisition Professional Development System (AAPDS) before the closing date of the announcement.
- Obtain a firm letter of acceptance or enrollment from the college or university dated within one year of the SOC program application submission deadline date. **Note: Conditional and outdated letters of acceptance or enrollment will not be accepted.**
- Enroll and take courses at an accredited college or university toward completion of a business or acquisition-related degree program of study
- Meet all of the requirements as outlined in the USAASC SOC program policy: http://asc.army.mil/policies/PoliciesProcedures.cfm.

Masters applicants must:

- Request an official transcript from the accredited university that will validate being a 4-year graduate and upload in AAPDS before the closing date of the announcement.
- Complete GMAT, GRE, or prerequisite course work for entering the degree program prior to applying for the SOC program. These tests and subsequent graduation fees are not funded by the SOC program.
- Obtain a firm letter of acceptance or enrollment from the college or university dated within one year of the SOC program application submission deadline date. **Note: Conditional and outdated letters of acceptance or enrollment will not be accepted.**
- Enroll and take courses at an accredited university toward completion of a business or acquisition-related degree program of study.

- Meet all of the requirements as outlined in the USAASC SOC program policy: http://asc.army.mil/policies/PoliciesProcedures.cfm.

HOW TO APPLY

The SOC program application is an automated process using AAPDS. To access AAPDS, please log in to the Career Acquisition Management Portal, https://rda.altess.army.mil/camp/ Once you login, click "Career Acquisition Personnel and Position Management Information System (CAPPMIS)". Once in CAPPMIS, click the "AAPDS" tab, then select the "Application Module" link and select the 2011 SOC program announcement.

REQUIRED APPLICATION DOCUMENTS IN AAPDS:

- Resume- Applicant must upload a current Resume in AAPDS. **Note: Resume must include current job duties and match ACRB or risk not being considered**.
- Individual Development Plan (IDP) Academic Plan - **All courses requiring SOC program funding must be entered in the Education Plan section of the IDP and approved by your supervisor.** Applicants should pay particular attention to the proper fiscal year dates for curriculum funding. The SOC program funding year runs concurrently with the fiscal year dates for curriculum funding. Applicants must choose "AETE" as the Planned Funding Source for each course listed in the IDP. Applicants must show the tuition cost for each course on the IDP. Applicants must ensure that the requested degree and required courses are business or acquisition related. Electives chosen must be acquisition-related or degree required for SOC program funding. A list of disciplines that are considered acquisition-related is outlined in the DAU iCatalog. Examples of non-acquisition degree and related courses are Art, History, Astronomy, Meteorology, and Physical Education among others. If an application is submitted with outdated IDP courses, dates or no tuition costs, the application will not go before the review board.
- Statement of Interest- Applicant must describe in 1,500 characters or less, (1) Why you want to be a participant in this degree opportunity, and (2) What benefits the organization and the Army will receive upon your graduation.
- Post Utilization Plan- Applicant's supervisor must describe in 1,500 characters or less the applicant's demonstrated potential for positions of increased responsibility, how their lack of education has impeded their career progression, and the utilization and benefits of the completed degree to the organization and the Army. This endorsement must be physically signed by the supervisor and uploaded into the AAPDS. **Note: This document endorses the applicant's participation, if selected**.
- Official transcript- Applicant must upload in AAPDS the transcripts from a completed degree and/or in progress that will clearly demonstrate the specific requirements: Bachelors-completion of 60 credit hours from an accredited university; Masters-completion of a 4-year undergraduate degree from an accredited university.
- Official letter of acceptance or enrollment- An official letter of acceptance or enrollment from the accredited university dated within one year of the SOC program application submission deadline date. **Note: Conditional and outdated letters of acceptance or enrollment will not be accepted.**

- Continue in service agreement- Applicant must agree to serve in the Department of Defense at least 3 years after the completion of the SOC program or risk government reimbursement. Applications without a signed and dated continue in service agreement, http://www.cpol.army.mil/library/train/catalog/acs_form.pdf will be deemed incomplete and will not go before the review board.
- ACRB- Applicant must provide current and accurate data (Education, Training, Experience, applicant and supervisor contact information). If information listed on the ACRB is outdated or inaccurate, the SOC program application will be deemed incomplete and not sent to the review board. If assistance is required in non-editable areas of the ACRB, contact an Acquisition Career Manager (ACM), DAMI_AskAnACM@conus@army.mil, 575-678-2247 or DSN 258-2247. **Note: ACRB and Resume must match or risk not being considered.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

- Start all courses in the SOC program application on or after August 1, 2011**. Note: SOC program will not provide funding for courses starting before this date**.
- Review complete SOC program details at http://asc.army.mil/career/programs/soc/default.cfm
- Ensure the SOC program application is saved in AAPDS prior to contacting the SOC Program Manager or an ACM, if application support is required.
- Submit application at least two weeks prior to the closing date of the announcement to allow for modifications, and resubmission.
- Contact the SOC Program Manager, Veronica Gonzalez, veronica.gonzalez1@us.army.mil, 703-805-1238 or DSN 655-1238 for additional SOC program questions.